

## Drug courts

Benefit-cost estimates updated December 2015. Literature review updated August 2014.

Current estimates replace old estimates. Numbers will change over time as a result of model inputs and monetization methods.

The WSIPP benefit-cost analysis examines, on an apples-to-apples basis, the monetary value of programs or policies to determine whether the benefits from the program exceed its costs. WSIPP's research approach to identifying evidence-based programs and policies has three main steps. First, we determine "what works" (and what does not work) to improve outcomes using a statistical technique called meta-analysis. Second, we calculate whether the benefits of a program exceed its costs. Third, we estimate the risk of investing in a program by testing the sensitivity of our results. For more detail on our methods, see our [technical documentation](#).

Program Description: While each drug court is unique, they each share the primary goals of reducing criminal recidivism and substance abuse among participants. Drug courts use comprehensive supervision, drug testing, treatment services, and immediate sanctions and incentives in an attempt to modify the behavior of certain drug-involved defendants. In our analysis we included the effect sizes of all drug court reports with reliable methodological rigor, regardless of drug court operations. Through a meta-regression analysis, we found that programs which excluded dealers were more successful in reducing recidivism (p-value: 0.018). We also analyzed follow-up period, pre/post adjudication court condition, and length of treatment, but found no statistically significant reduction in recidivism due to these variables.

### Benefit-Cost Summary

#### Program benefits

Participants	\$0
Taxpayers	\$4,082
Other (1)	\$9,323
Other (2)	(\$434)
Total	\$12,972
Costs	(\$4,958)
Benefits minus cost	\$8,013

#### Summary statistics

Benefit to cost ratio	\$2.62
Benefits minus costs	\$8,013
Probability of a positive net present value	100 %

The estimates shown are present value, life cycle benefits and costs. All dollars are expressed in the base year chosen for this analysis (2014). The economic discount rates and other relevant parameters are described in our [technical documentation](#).

## Detailed Monetary Benefit Estimates

Source of benefits	Benefits to				
	Participants	Taxpayers	Other (1)	Other (2)	Total benefits
From primary participant					
Crime	\$0	\$4,082	\$9,323	\$2,037	\$15,442
Adjustment for deadweight cost of program	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$2,471)	(\$2,471)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$4,082</b>	<b>\$9,323</b>	<b>(\$434)</b>	<b>\$12,972</b>

We created the two "other" categories to report results that do not fit neatly in the "participant" or "taxpayer" perspectives. In the "Other (1)" category we include the benefits of reductions in crime victimization, the economic spillover benefits of improvement in human capital outcomes, and the benefits from private or employer-paid health insurance. In the "Other (2)" category we include estimates of the net changes in the value of a statistical life and net changes in the deadweight costs of taxation.

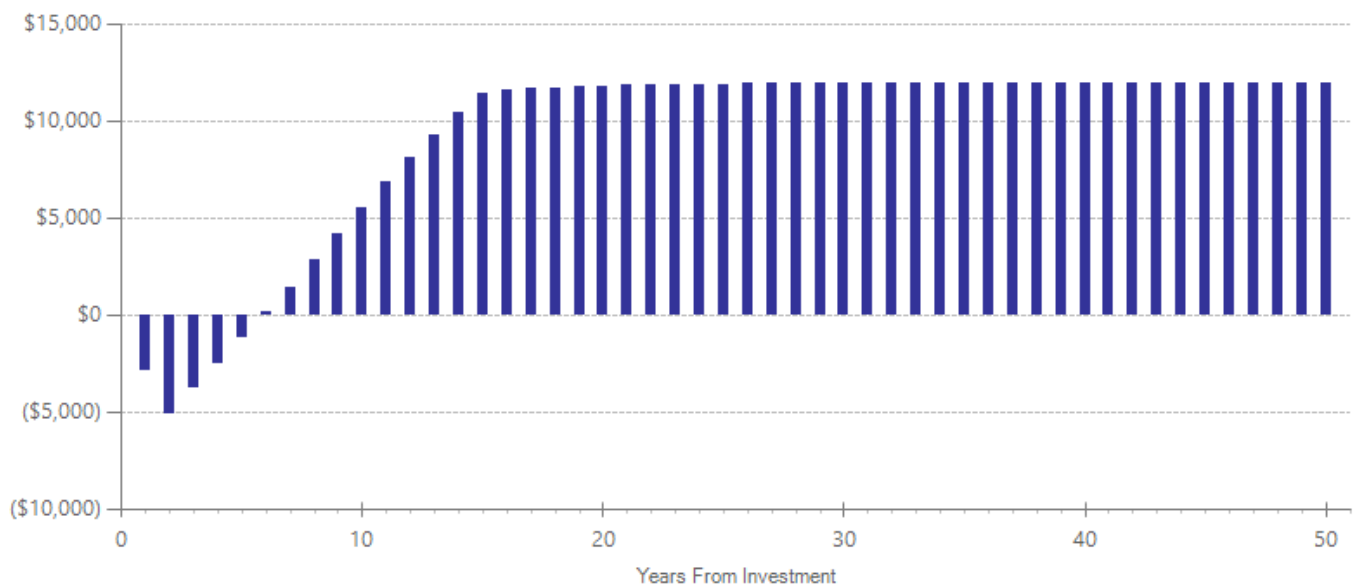
## Detailed Cost Estimates

	Annual cost	Program duration	Year dollars	Summary statistics	
Program costs	\$9,488	1.2	2003	Present value of net program costs (in 2014 dollars)	(\$4,958)
Comparison costs	\$7,335	1	2003	Uncertainty (+ or - %)	30 %

Estimated from Barnoski, R., & Aos, S. (2003). Washington State's drug courts for adult defendants: Outcome evaluation and cost-benefit analysis (Document No. 03-03-1201). Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

The figures shown are estimates of the costs to implement programs in Washington. The comparison group costs reflect either no treatment or treatment as usual, depending on how effect sizes were calculated in the meta analysis. The uncertainty range is used in Monte Carlo risk analysis, described in our [technical documentation](#).

## Cumulative Net Cash Flows Over Time (Non-Discounted Dollars)



## Meta-Analysis of Program Effects

Outcomes measured	Primary or secondary participant	No. of effect sizes	Treatment N	Unadjusted effect size (random effects model)		Adjusted effect sizes and standard errors used in the benefit-cost analysis					
						First time ES is estimated			Second time ES is estimated		
				ES	p-value	ES	SE	Age	ES	SE	Age
Crime	Primary	70	28281	-0.277	0.001	-0.251	0.025	34	-0.251	0.025	44

## Citations Used in the Meta-Analysis

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